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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/049,986	07/01/2002	Seishi Nagamori	56972 (71526)	2684

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EXAMINER

HORNING, MICHELLE S

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1648

MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
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08/20/2008

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/049,986	Applicant(s) NAGAMORI, SEISHI	
	Examiner MICHELLE HORNING	Art Unit 1648	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 30 June 2008.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 30-35 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 30-35 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

The status of the claims is as follows: claims 30-35 are under current examination and claims 1-29 are cancelled.

A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 6/30/2008 has been entered.

Please note that Applicant did not sign the REMARKS submitted 6/30/2008.

In response to the arguments, it is not clear what the arguments are. Applicant claims to further include "additional method steps whereby the human hepatocyte can be infected with hepatitis C virus more efficiently" (see REMARKS page 4). See rejection where this is addressed.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 30-35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combined teachings of Kawada et al (1998) and Aoki et al (1998).

Kawada et al meets the structural limitation of the bioreactor system. The authors

disclose a support system employing a highly functional liver cell line cultured in a radial flow bioreactor and compared the cells to those grown in a conventional monolayer culture (see Summary). The radial flow bioreactor consists of a matrix comprised of porous glass bead microcarriers to which cells attach and proliferate throughout the matrix (see Results). Using the disclosed three-dimensional culture leads to the cell's natural morphology and function. The continuous flow through the matrix generates a beneficial concentration gradient of oxygen and nutrients while preventing excessive shear stresses or build up of waste products (see Introduction). Further, conditions resembling the *in vivo* state can be achieved (see Introduction). See Figures 2 and 3 for a diagram of the system and the 3D morphology of the cells achieved by this system. The authors demonstrate that this bioreactor can maintain highly dense cell cultures in excess of 1.1×10^8 cells/ ml-matrix (see page 114). Page 114 provides the following recitation:

“Three-dimensional culture enables cells to be globe shaped and to come true high density culture because of the good condition of the cells. Another important benefit of the radial flow bioreactor is the ability to scale up. Theoretically, massive cultures can be maintained in bioreactors having volumes of tens of liters.”

The authors also note the following on page 113:

“The present study demonstrated that the new reactor device overcomes several of the problems associated with conventional culture systems: (a) short culture lifespan and insufficient cellular function and productivity due to poor culture environment, (b)

insufficient cell density, and (c) difficulty to scale-up culture processes". This reference does not teach proliferation of hepatitis C virus or FLC4 cell line (claim 34).

Aoki et al. teach an *in vitro* system that successfully supports the efficient growth of HCV via the FLC4 cell line. Following transfection with RNA, this cell line in particular exhibited very high reporter gene expression with pT7HCVLuc in comparison to the low success rates of various other cell lines (see Abstract). Aoki et al. teach that the combination of the HCV minigene with the FLC4 cell line is "useful to study the virus-cell interaction of HCV infection and other viruses for which there are no efficient *in vitro* replication systems" (see Introduction).

Thus, it would have been obvious to the ordinary artisan to combine the two teachings above in order to perform a method of proliferating HCV using the FLC4 cell line and the disclosed bioreactor. One would have been motivated to do so in order to provide optimal culture conditions of the hepatocytes (see Kawada et al) using a particular cell line known to successfully express HCV (Aoki et al). Also, Kawada et al describe the ability of the system to maintain massive cultures and "scale up" as opposed to conventional culture systems (see pages 113 and 114). Combination of the teachings would allow for the artisan to proliferate HCV at a greater scale using maintained massive culture. There would have been a reasonable expectation of success given the authors of the references applied demonstrate either a successful bioreactor or cell line. Of note, it would have been obvious to stop circulation of the culture medium in order to take a test sample (e.g. pH testing or confirm HCV infectivity) and restart the circulation in order to allow for continued proliferation of HCV (see claim

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30). Also, it would have been obvious to the ordinary artisan to alter the supply rate of either the medium or oxygen to the cells before, during and after HCV infection of the cells in order to gain optimal results (see claim 31); any modification of the supply (including rate of supply) is considered routine optimization. For these reasons, the invention as a whole was clearly *prima facie* obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made.

Conclusion

NO CLAIM IS ALLOWED. No argument is found to be persuasive.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to MICHELLE HORNING whose telephone number is (571)272-9036. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 8:00-5:00 EST.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Bruce Campell can be reached on 571-272-0974. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Michelle Horning/
Examiner, Art Unit 1648

/Bruce Campell/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 1648